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Cambodian Rebel Aid Cleared

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For the first time, the Democratic-controlled House yesterday went on record in favor of overt military or economic aid to noncommunist forces fighting the Vietnamese occupation of Cambodia.

The 288-to-122 vote, on an amendment to the 1986 foreign aid authorization bill, allows the Reagan administration to provide \$5 million next year and \$5 million in fiscal 1987 to two noncommunist resistance groups. The communist Khmer Rouge, which killed more than 2 million Cambodians when it ruled the country from 1975 to 1979, is prohibited from receiving any of the funds.

In May the Senate approved identical language in its version of the 1986 foreign aid bill.

Proposed by liberal Democrat Stephen J. Solarz (N.Y.), the House amendment had strong bipartisan backing despite warnings from a few liberals that a new program of overt aid to the rebels might lead to renewed direct U.S. involvement in Southeast Asia.

The Washington Post reported this week that the Central Intelligence Agency has provided millions of dollars in covert aid since 1982 to the two noncommunist resistance groups, both smaller than their coalition partner, the Khmer Rouge.

In other action on the foreign aid bill, the House voted, 386 to 2, to freeze 1986 funds at this year's level of \$12.6 billion, exempting Israel and Egypt and keeping the overall budget freeze adopted by the House several months ago.